


# Library Trustee 101

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# Today's Topics

- Public Libraries – How They Work
- The Library Trustee's Job
  - Obtain Funding
  - Library Policy
  - Advocate for Staff
  - Evaluate the Director
  - Future Planning and Library Standards
  - Advocacy
  - Intellectual Freedom
  - Maintain Strong Boards
- Library Policies
- Library Advocacy
- Libraries in a post-pandemic world
- Topics From the Floor

# Wisconsin Public Libraries – How they work



# The Creation of a Wisconsin Public Library

- Chapter 43 of Wisconsin Statute
- Municipality/County Entity
- Member of a Library System
- Other Stakeholders



# Chapter 43

- Guiding law about libraries, library system, library boards, and their relationships with their governing bodies.
- Gives the library board its authority
- Lays out the distribution of responsibility when it comes to library financials, establishment, and other administrative duties
- Chapter 43

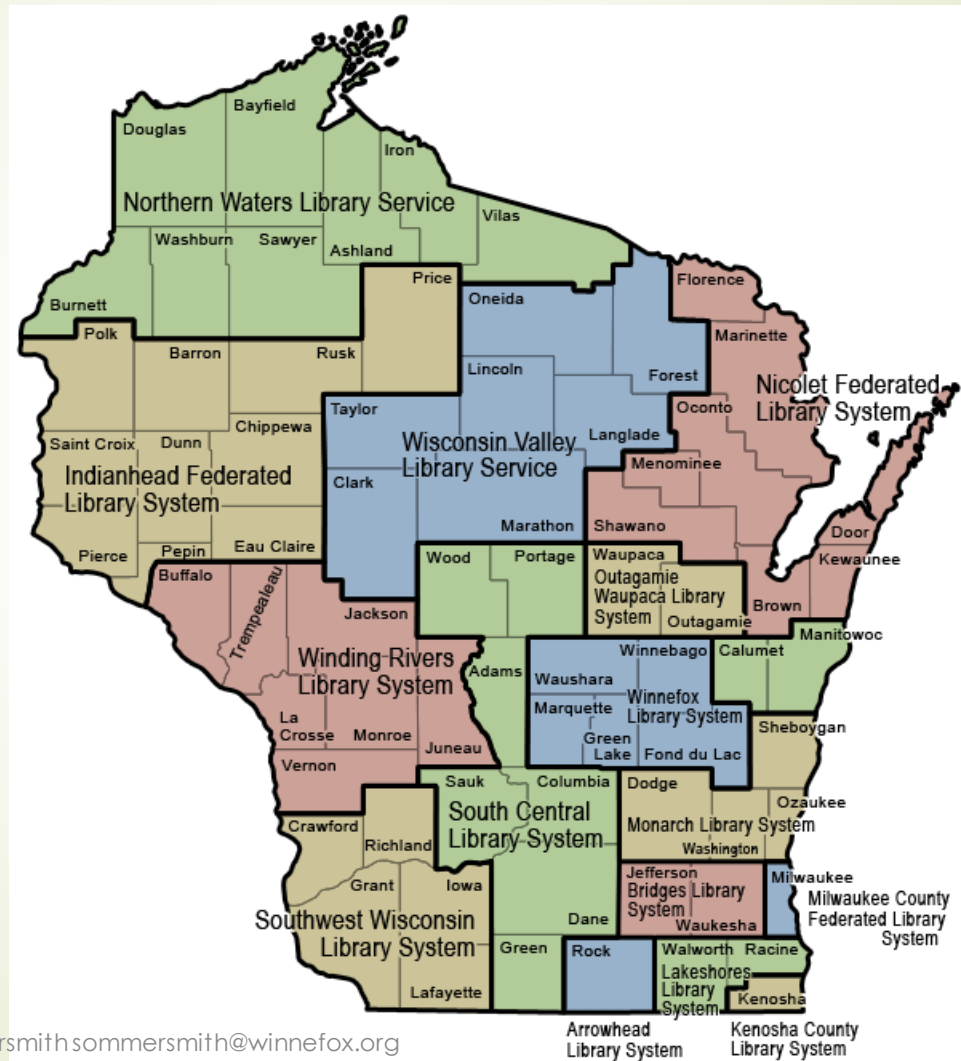
# Library Requirements under Chapter 43

- Under Section 43.15(4)(c), the Library must
  - Share its materials and serve all residents of the system area
  - Hire a properly certified director who works in the library at least 10 hours a week when the library is open.
  - Be open at least 20 hours a week
  - Annually spend at least \$2,500 on materials

# Municipality/County Entity

- A municipality or county establishes a public library under their governance
- Staff are often government employees
- Financials held by the municipality
- Library participates in the budget cycle
- Maintain library buildings

# Library Systems in Wisconsin





# Role of the Library System

- Promote the development of strong local libraries
- Help libraries cooperate with each other and with other organizations and agencies
- Provide “background” services to free up local staff time for public service
- Advocate for library services

# Library System Mandatory Services

- Technology and resource sharing planning
- Referral of reference and interlibrary loan requests
- Electronic and physical delivery of information and materials
- Training for library staff and trustees
- Professional consultant services
- Support for library service to users with special needs
- Backup reference, information, and interlibrary loan services from the system resource library (Oshkosh PL)
- Planning with other types of libraries
- Service agreements with adjacent library systems
- Agreements with member libraries that require serving all residents of the system area on the same basis as local residents

# Other Stakeholders

- Friends Organizations
- Local Businesses and Community Groups
- Local Schools
- Department of Public Instruction
- Other System Member Libraries
- Local and Adjacent Counties
- Wisconsin Library Association

# The Library Key Partnerships

- The Municipality
- The Library Board
- The Library Director and staff

For a library to become and remain successful all three must work together

# Questions?





# The Trustee's Job



# The Trustee's Job

- ▶ Main Entry: <sup>1</sup>trust ·ee Pronunciation: \, trəs-'tē\  
Function: *noun* Date: 1647
- ▶ 1: one to whom something is entrusted
- ▶ 2a: a natural or legal person to whom property is legally committed to be administered for the benefit of a beneficiary (as a person or a charitable organization)
- ▶ 2b: one (as a corporate director) occupying a position of trust and performing functions comparable to those of a trustee

*--from the Merriam-Webster online dictionary*

# General Responsibilities of Trustees

- As library trustees you are public officials. You have the same duties & responsibilities as elected officials.
  - Provide proper stewardship of public property
  - Ensure that the library is well-run
  - Support & promote the library
  - Plan for the library's future
  - Ensure the library is obeying federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, and rules.

# Trustee's Job

- Obtain Funding
- Library Policy
- Advocate for Staff
- Hire and Evaluate the Director
- Future Planning and Library Standards
- Advocacy
- Intellectual Freedom
- Maintain Strong Boards

# Library Board Authority – Financial

- [Trustee Essentials Chapter 8 - Budget](#)
- [Trustee Essentials Chapter 9 – Managing Money](#)
- The library board shall have *exclusive control* of the expenditure of all moneys collected, donated or appropriated for the library fund. [43.58(1)]
- The library board also shall have *exclusive charge, control and custody* of all lands, buildings, money or other property devised, bequeathed, given or granted to, or otherwise acquired or leased by, the municipality for library purposes. [43.58(1)]



# The Board's Financial Responsibilities

- Approve the annual budget
- Review & approve monthly expenditures
- Oversee expenditures to ensure that money is spent according to the budget
- Oversee the library's money, investing gift and trust funds as appropriate

# 20 Basic Distribution of Responsibilities: Financial

Municipality	Library Board	Library Director
Appropriate library funds	Examine draft budget presented by the director, revise as necessary and officially adopt. Present budget to the municipality	Prepare and submit to the library board a budget proposal based on current and anticipated needs of the library.
Amend appropriation to reflect significant changes in library needs	Review and approve expenditures in accordance with the budget. Amend budget as necessary	Maintain complete and accurate records. Expend funds based on the approved budget.

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# Library Board Authority – Library Policy

- ▶ [Trustee Essentials Chapter 10](#)
- ▶ Every public library shall be free for the use of the inhabitants of the municipality by which it is established and maintained, subject to such reasonable regulations as the library board prescribes in order to render its use most beneficial to the greatest number. The library board may exclude from the use of the public library all persons who willfully violate such regulations. [43.52 (2)]

# The Board's Policy Responsibilities

- Approve policies on such issues as:
  - Library services
  - Personnel policies
  - Board bylaws
- More detail later in the workshop



# Basic Distribution of 24 Responsibilities: Policy

Municipality	Library Board	Library Director
May have building policies library would wish to adopt	Determine policies needs	Advise board policy recommendations
May of personnel policies library would wish to adhere to	Approve recommended policies	Enforce policies among patrons and staff

# Trustee's Job

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# Library Board Authority – Administration

- ▶ [Trustee Essentials Chapter 7](#)
- ▶ [Trustee Essentials Chapter 6](#)
- ▶ Notwithstanding ss. 59.17 (2) (br) and 59.18 (2) (b), the library board shall supervise the administration of the public library and shall appoint a librarian, who shall appoint such other assistants and employees as the library board deems necessary, and prescribe their duties and compensation. [43.58(4)]

# The Board's Administrative Responsibilities

- Hire the director
- Approve other staff positions
- Approve job descriptions for library staff
- Set compensation for library staff
- Review usage statistics to ensure that the library is being used to the greatest extent possible
- Plan for the library's future
- More detail in Trustee 201

# Basic Distribution of 28 Responsibilities: Staff

Municipality	Library Board	Library Director
	Determine number of staff and their duties. Approve job descriptions.	Advise board on staff needs and duties. Draft job descriptions for board approval.
	Recruit, hire, and evaluate the director	Recruit, hire, and evaluate library staff
	Set salary & benefit levels for library staff	Suggest appropriate staff salaries to the board



# Trustee's Job

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# Library Board Authority – Future Planning

- ▶ Trustee Essentials Chapter 11 – Future Planning
- ▶ Trustee Essentials Chapter 12 – Library Standards
- ▶ Notwithstanding ss. 59.17 (2) (br) and 59.18 (2) (b), the library board shall supervise the administration of the public library and shall appoint a librarian, who shall appoint such other assistants and employees as the library board deems necessary, and prescribe their duties and compensation. [43.58(4)]

# The Board's Planning Responsibilities

- Be in communication and aware of the community needs
- Have regular board meetings with future goals for the library to working towards
- Have a plan outline and a goal of what you want to accomplish
- Look to other libraries for sample strategic plans
- [Wisconsin Public Library Standards – OWLS Resource](#)

# Basic Distribution of Responsibilities: Strategic Planning

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Municipality	Library Board	Library Director
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Include the library in community planning.		
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	Study community needs and interests and see they are addressed in plans. Regularly evaluate progress toward goals.	
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		Manage daily operations with community needs and interests in mind. Continually refine library services to achieve goals.
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	Conduct board business at regularly scheduled meetings	
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		Prepare and present written reports for board as requested and /or required.
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# Library Board Authority – Advocacy

- Trustee Essentials Chapter 13 – Library Advocacy



# The Board's Advocacy Responsibilities

- Establish priorities for advocacy
- Stayed informed
- Attend continuing education when available
- More details later in workshop

# Basic Distribution of 36 Responsibilities: Advocacy

Municipality	Library Board	Library Director
Support the library. Advocate for the library with county and state officials	Advocate for the library through contact with civic groups, elected officials, and citizens.	Advocate for the library.
	Be knowledgeable about local, state, and federal legislation affecting libraries.	Be knowledgeable about local, state, and federal legislation affecting libraries. Keep the board informed of proposed new legislation.

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# Library Board Authority – Intellectual Freedom

- [Trustee Essentials Chapter 22 – Freedom of Expression and Inquiry](#)
- [Trustee Essentials Chapter 23 – Dealing with Challenges](#)
- 1) The legislature recognizes:
  - (a) The importance of free access to knowledge, information and diversity of ideas by all residents of this state;
  - (b) The critical role played by public, school, special and academic libraries in providing that access;
  - (c) The major educational, cultural and economic asset that is represented in the collective knowledge and information resources of the state's libraries;
  - (d) The importance of public libraries to the democratic process; and
  - (e) That the most effective use of library resources in this state can occur only through interlibrary cooperation among all types of libraries and the effective use of technology.[43.00(1)]

# The Board's Intellectual Freedom Responsibilities

- Support and keep updated policies on:
  - Collection Development
  - Internet Access
  - Meeting Room and Display
- Procedure for when something is challenged
- Communicate with director

# Basic Distribution of 40 Responsibilities: Intellectual Freedom

Municipality	Library Board	Library Director
Support local board and library control	Pass a necessary policies	Engage and respond to collection concerns
	Possibly receive complaints from patrons	Reach out to system and CCBC support and information
	Support director's recommendations	Follow the direction in the policies
	May hold public hearings	Communicate with board
	Communicate with director	



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# The Board's Authority - Boards

- Must annually elect a board president (and any other officers the board decides to create) [43.54(2) & 43.57(5)(d)]
- Must approve and submit the required annual report to the municipality and the DPI [43.58(6)]
- Must be sure their library director qualifies for and maintains the appropriate certification [43.15(4)(c)(6) & Admin. Code PI 6]
- May retain custody of certain funds (gifts and donations), following the provisions of Wis. Stat. s.43.58(7)

# The Board's Board Responsibilities

- Adhere to board bylaws
- Have current and correct board appointments
- Meet regularly
- Follow the other duties and responsibilities as laid out above
- Be engaged beyond meetings
- Attend Trustee workshops 😊

# Basic Distribution of Responsibilities: Boards

Municipality	Library Board	Library Director
Appoint qualified and interested citizens to the library board, taking into consideration recommendations from the board.	Recommend qualified candidates for appointment to the board. Notify municipality of vacancies on the board.	Assist in recommending candidates for library board.

# 45 Basic Distribution of Responsibilities: Boards

Municipality	Library Board	Library Director
	Provide orientation for new trustees	Participate in orientation for new trustees
	Participate in continuing education and encourage director to do so.	Participate in continuing education and encourage staff to do so.
Communicate	Communicate	Communicate

# How Far Does A Trustee's Authority Run?

- The Library Board's authority is *collective*, not *individual*
- An individual trustee can act only to the extent authorized by the board
- Individual trustees attempting to exercise authority on their own can place the director in an untenable position.



# Resources

- [Trustee Essentials: A Handbook for Wisconsin Public Library Trustees](#)
- [Winnefox resources for directors and trustees](#)
- [Tools and Resources for Public Library Directors and Board Members:](#)
- [Chapter 43 of Wisconsin Statutes](#)
- [Trustee Tale newsletter](#)
- [OWLS Links for Libraries](#)

# Questions?



# Policies: The Library's Operating Instructions



# Policies: The Library's Operating Instructions

- Are the basis for library operating procedures
- Guide decision-making by the director and staff
- Ensure that all users are treated equitably
- Ensure quality library service

# Policy Essentials

1. Be reasonable
2. Be clear
3. Be applied fairly
4. Comply with current law (Local, state, & federal)
  - Statutory changes
  - Court decisions
  - Administrative rule revisions

Policies should be reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to meet these requirements.



# Policies Every Library Must Have

- Collection or Selection (how the library decides what to buy and what to weed, how to handle complaints about content, how you deal with gifts of books, etc.)
- Personnel (work rules, benefits, discipline, etc.)
- Acceptable behavior
- Circulation (checkout rules, fines)
- Computer, Internet, and WiFi



# Policies Every Library Must Have

- Emergencies and bad weather
- Unattended children
- Fees (photocopy, etc.)
- Volunteers
- Gifts and donations of money
- Records retention
- Social Media
- Confidentiality/Privacy
- Library Cards (who is eligible for a card, when are privileges revoked)
- Media (who speaks for the library?)

# Policies Your Library May Need

- Meeting room use
- Exhibits and displays
- Bulletin board
- Trust fund

# Resources

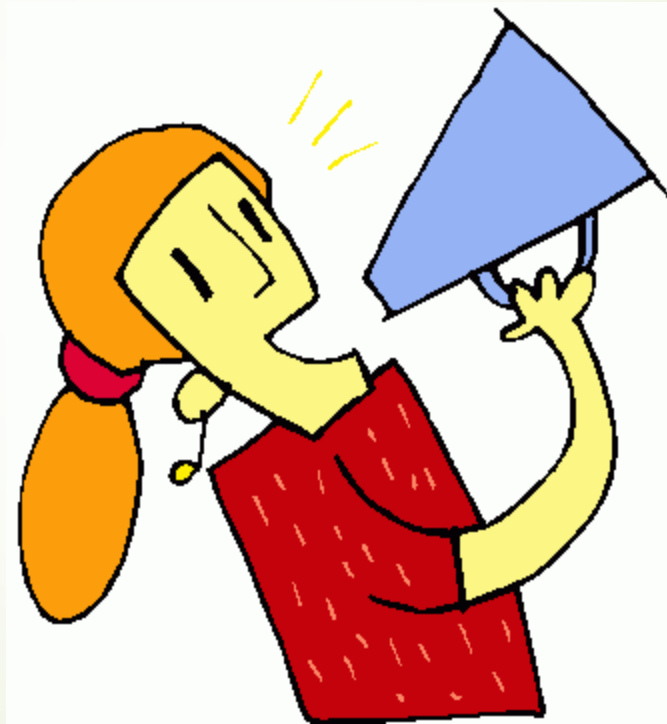
- [Trustee Essentials # 10: Developing Essential Library Policies](#)
- [Wisconsin Public Library Policy Resources](#)
- [League of Wisconsin Municipalities](#)

# Questions?

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# Advocacy—Speaking Up For the Library



# What is Advocacy?

- Different from public relations and marketing.
- “Planned, deliberate, sustained effort to raise awareness of an issue or issues.”
- Building support and understanding step by step.
- Creating a Common Agenda

--Patricia M. Cavill, “Creating a Common Agenda”



# Areas of Advocacy

- Community: Ordinary people in the community
- Local Elected Officials: Municipal board, County Supervisors
- State Elected Officials: Governor, State Legislators
- Nationally: Members of Congress

# Why is this necessary?

- Some see libraries as outdated or unimportant in an internet age.
- People in the community need to know how they can benefit from the library's services.
- Public services are facing severe cutbacks in the current political and economic climate.
- The library's story needs to be told to elected officials in order to get a fair share of municipal & county funding

# Where should you speak up?

- Municipal board meetings
- Meetings of other community organizations
- Informally (grocery store, park, etc.)
- Media communication (letters to the editor, radio call-in shows, etc.)
- Social media

# What Do You Say?

- Correct rumors and misinformation
- Tell people how the library helps the community
- Talk about library services people may not know about
- Mobilize public support for capital project or operating budget
- **Tell the library's story**

# Creating a common agenda

- ▶ People/officials/legislators do things for *their* reasons, not yours.
- ▶ People/officials/legislators pay attention to the things that *they* love and value.
- ▶ How can you connect the library's needs with the interests and values of the person you're talking to?

# The rule of 10

- It takes 10 contacts from constituents to make an official really sit up and take notice.
- The more people who speak out, the stronger the voice of libraries.
- “When I get a call from someone who’s not on a board or committee and isn’t part of an organized group it makes all the difference in the world”

--City Council member



# Resources

- [Wisconsin Library Trustees & Friends](#)
- [Library advocacy resource center](#)
- [The Economic impact of public libraries on the economy of Wisconsin](#)
- [Library use and Return on Investment Calculator](#)

# Questions?



# Libraries in a Post-pandemic World – Cons

- Concern over funding – decreasing circulation
- Missing in person interactions with patrons; welcoming the public back into the building
- Stress of navigating safety needs and desires of the public/municipality/board
- Mental health stressors/burnout
- Lack of internet access leading to underserved communities

# Libraries in a Post-pandemic World – Pros

- A call for more collaborations
  - Continued momentum with PLSR
- Significant grant funding, including the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
- Accessing larger audiences with virtual content
- Considerations of library space needs

# Resources

- [DPI Reopening Guide and Addendum](#)
- [DPI COVID-19 Resources](#)
- [DPI Libraries are for Everyone Blog](#)
- [Winnefox COVID 19 Resource Page](#)
- Wisconsin Library Association Strong Libraries=Strong Communities Video Campaign
  - [Access, Workforce Development and Technology](#)
  - [The Pillars of a Community Through a Pandemic](#)
  - [Patron Stories: Lifelong Learning and Literacy](#)



# Questions?





# General resources for Trustees:

- [Trustee Essentials: A Handbook for Wisconsin Public Library Trustees](#)
- [OWLS Links for Libraries](#)
- [Winnefox resource page for directors and trustees:](#)

# General resources for Trustees:

- Tools and Resources for Public Library Directors and Board Members:
- Library System staff
- Your municipal attorney, clerk, or administrator
- Shannon Schultz, Public Library Administration Consultant (608) 266-7270 or [shannon.schultz@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:shannon.schultz@dpi.wi.gov)

# Topics From The Floor Final Questions?





*"That's all Folks!"*